

REMARKS

Entry and consideration of this Preliminary Amendment are respectfully requested prior to or concurrent with calculation of the filing fees.

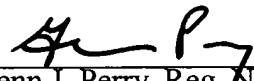
This Preliminary Amendment was filed to amend claims 6-9 and 12-18. By this Amendment, multiple dependencies in the claims have been eliminated.

Examination on the merits is awaited.

Respectfully submitted,

SMITH, GAMBRELL & RUSSELL, LLP

By: \_\_\_\_\_

  
Glenn J. Perry, Reg. No. 28,458  
1850 M Street, N.W., Suite 800  
Washington, D.C. 20036  
Telephone: (202) 263-4300  
Fax: (202) 263-4329

Date: December 17, 2004